

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3599

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USIAC

FOR: IOP/MEDIA REACTION; IEA

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AN EDITORIAL IN DECEMBER 4TH ENGLISH LANGUAGE CHINA NEWS UNDER THE HEAD "NUCLEAR MISSILE LIMITATION."
2. PRESIDENT FORD SPOKE PERSUASIVELY ABOUT THE VLADIVOSTOK NUCLEAR MISSILE AGREEMENT AT THIS WEEK'S PRESS CONFERENCE.
3. IF HE IS CORRECT, A LID HAS AT LAST BEEN PLACED ON THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE BETWEEN THE UNIRQ STATES AND THE USSR.
4. EACH COUNTRY WILL BE LIMITED TO 2,400 INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILES. THIS INCLUDES WARHEADS WHICH ARE MOUNTED ON SUBMARINES OR CARRIED BY AIRPLANES.

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5. OF THESE 2,400, NO MORE THAN 1,320 CAN BE MIRVS -

THOSE MULTI-HEADED MONSTROSITIES WHICH COULD KNOCK OUT
A WHOLE STATE RATHER THAN A MERE CITY.

6. SOME OBSERVERS HAVE SUSPECTED THAT THE AGREEMENT
GIVES THE SOVIETS AN ADVANTAGE BECAUSE THEIR MISSILES
ARE BIGGER.

7. PRESIDENT FORD SAID THIS IS NOT NECESSARILY THE CASE,
BECAUSE THE UNITED STATES CAN INCREASE "THROW WEIGHT"
AT ANY TIME IT WISHES TO SPEND THE MONEY FOR BIGGER
VEHICLES.

8. THE AMERICAN CHIEF EXECUTIVE BELIEVES LEONID
BREZHNEV IS SINCERE IN WANTING TO SETTLE FOR NUCLEAR
EQUALITY. HE DOES NOT SUGGEST THAT THE USSR HAS
SUDDENLY ENTERED THE RANKS OF THE PEACEMAKERS. THE
SOVIET UNION IS MOTIVATED BY COSTS WHICH ARE GETTING
OUT OF HAND.

9. ALTHOUGH THE AGREEMENT WILL ENABLE THE UNITED STATES
TO KEEP NUCLEAR MISSILE SPENDING AT ABOUT THE PRESENT
LEVEL, OTHER DEFENSE EXPENDITURES WILL RISE BECAUSE OF
INFLATION AND FOR LACK OF ANY LIMITATION OF CONVENTIONAL
ARMAMENTS.

10. NOTHING MUCH CAN BE DONE ABOUT THE INCREASING COST
OF NON-NUCLEAR DEFENSE. THE UNITED STATES AND THE USSR
CAN AGREE ABOUT ICBMS BECAUSE THEY HAVE A VIRTUAL
MONOPOLY. CONVENTIONAL ARMAMENTS ARE WIDELY DISTRIBUTED.
BOTH U.S. AND USSR MUST THINK OF MANY POTENTIAL ANTAGONISTS
AND NOT MERELY OF ONE ANOTHER.

11. CAN THE RUSSIAN COMMUNISTS BE TRUSTED TO KEEP THEIR
WORD? NO, BUT NUCLEAR AGREEMENTS HAVE BECAOME VIRTUALLY
SELF-ENFORCING. SPIES IN THE SKY CAN DETECT NUCLEAR
EMPLACEMENTS ANYWHERE IN THE SKY CAN DETECT NUCLEAR
EMPLACEMENTS ANYWHERE IN THE SOVIET UNION. THE UNITED
STATES HAS, IN FACT, SOMEWHAT GREATER FREEDOM OF
CONCEALMENT BECAUSE OF ITS LARGER NUMBER OF SUBMARINE
LAUNCHERS.

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12. MR. FORD ALSO SPOKE OF THE ECONOMY AND SOUNDED ONE
HOPEFUL NOTE. ALARMISTS ARE EXAGGERATING THE SCOPE OF
THE CRISIS, HE SAID, AND RECALLED PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S
1933 DECLARATION THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAD NOTHING
TO FEAR EXCEPT FEAR ITSELF.

13. HE CHALLENGED CONGRESS TO GET BUSY AND APPROVE BUDGET

REDUCTIONS, AN EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, TRADE AND TAX REFORM, AND MEASURES TO CONSERVE ENERGY. HE EXPRESSED FEAR THAT CONGRESS MAY BE MORE INCLINED TO SPEND MONEY THAN TO SAVE IT.

14. NO ONE CAN QUARREL WITH HIS CONCLUSION THAT THE FIGHTS AGAINST INFLATION AND RECESSION MUST BE BALANCED. WHAT IS GOOD FOR ONE MAY BE BAD FOR THE OTHER, AND VICE VERSA.

15. HAVING BROUGHT ABOUT PRESIDENT NIXON'S DOWNFALL AND ASSERTED THE POWER OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, THE U.S. CONGRESS SEEMS TO BE PLACING A CHIP ON ITS SHOULDER AND PREPARING TO DARE MR. FORD TO KNOCK IT OFF.(

16. A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE AMERICAN EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATURE WOULD BE BAD FOR THE UNITED STATES AND THE WORLD. MR. FORD DID NOT SPEAK VINDICTIVELY. HE CAN BE EXPECTED TO CALL ON HIS 25 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO PERSUADE CONGRESS NOT ONLY TO ACT BUT TO ACT MORE CONSTRUCTIVELY.
CLARKE

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